

REMARKS

Applicants would initially like to thank the Examiner for consideration of Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement as indicated by return of the signed PTO Form-1449.

By the present Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-11 as obvious over McKenna in view of Mitchell and Tsuria. The Abstract has also been objected to for informalities.

Claims 12-20 are now in the application. Claims 1-11 have been cancelled. Claims 12-20 have been added. Allowance of new claims 12-20 is respectfully requested.

By the present Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-11 as obvious over McKenna in view of Mitchell and Tsuria. In view of the cancellation of claims 1-11, these rejections are now moot. Applicants note, however, that the cancellation of claims 1-11 and addition of claims 12-20 is not responsive to prior art or in any way relates to the rejection of claims 1-11.

The primary reference McKenna and the secondary reference Mitchell do not teach or suggest so much as a single limitation found in the body of claim 1. Further, Applicants have reviewed the tertiary reference Tsuria on pages 28-29 (and surrounding pages) as cited by the Examiner, but find no teachings consistent with the Examiner's citation to such pages. Indeed, claims 1-11 were the subject of a search at the European Patent Office in connection with the PCT priority application, for which such search only identified category "A" references. As such, claims 1-11 are patentably distinct over the applied art. New claims 12-20 provide a clear recitation of the invention and have been added only for that purpose. No estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

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The Examiner has objected to the Abstract for various informalities. The Abstract has been replaced herein. Withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract is requested.

In view of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance, and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If a telephone conference would be of value, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge/credit any fee deficiencies or overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-4293 (Order No. 11696.4011).

Respectfully submitted,



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